

PROCEDURES FOR OBTAINING LEGAL OWNERSHIP OF ABANDONED OR
SALVAGED BOATS, ATV'S OR SNOWMOBILES
(Not including property left at a marina, storage or repair facility)

Definition of abandoned and/or salvaged:

- Has remained moored, grounded, or otherwise attached or fastened to or upon or immediately adjacent to private property for more than 30 days *without the consent of the owner* or person or entity in control of the property; or
- Has been found adrift or unattended in or upon the waters of the Commonwealth and constitutes a potential health, public safety, or environmental hazard; or
- Recovered from a dump and/or landfill.

Procedure:

1. A "Request for File Search" must be completed and sent in to our office to research the last known owner on the abandoned property. After it has been researched, the file search will be sent back to the individual requesting the abandoned vehicle/vessel information to begin the abandoned boat/vehicle process. *(Based on the findings, an inspection may be needed by the Environmental Police.)* If an inspection is required, please call 1-800-632-8075 to request an Environmental Officer perform an inspection on the abandoned property.
2. If the Office of Law Enforcement determines that the property is abandoned and not stolen, the claimant shall notify all owners/and or lien holders by certified first class mail, return receipt requested of their intent to claim the property.

If the Bureau records indicate no known owner, please proceed to the following:

The claimant may supply a detailed explanation of the unsuccessful steps taken to identify the owner and any lien holders and to secure the address of the owner or any lien holders, including any returned notices.

3. If the owner of record does not reply within thirty (30) days, the claimant shall cause a notice to appear for (3) three consecutive days in a newspaper of general circulation published in the county, city or town where the property is located, where the owner of the boat has its address, or if the owner's name and address are unavailable, where a lien holder has its place of business. The notice given pursuant to this section shall contain the following:
 - A description of the property, including any identifying numbers;
 - A description of the location where the vessel is situated;

- A statement informing the owner and lien holder of their right to reclaim the property within (30) thirty days subject to the rights of any other lien holders.
 - A statement that failure to claim property will constitute a waiver of all rights, title and interest in the property; and
 - A statement that if ownership or lien holder interest is not claimed and the vessel is not removed within (90) ninety days of the last day of notice by publication, whichever is later, the claimant may apply to the Division for title to the property.
4. If the owner of lien holder fails to claim the property within (90) ninety days after the return receipt is received by the claimant or (90) ninety days after the last day of notice is given by publication, whichever is later, application for title may be submitted.

In review, your request must include the following:

1. Completed Registration & Titling Application
2. Proof of sales tax payment paid to the Department of Revenue (You can contact the DOR at 1-800-392-6089 concerning any tax questions or to determine an assessed value on the boat/vehicle.
3. Request for File Search Form (Based on the findings, a boat inspection may be required. This inspection is performed by the Environmental Police.
4. A **notarized affidavit** by the claimant stating that the property has been abandoned for at least (90) ninety days and that all notice requirements under the abandoned procedure have been satisfied.
5. A copy of the letter, if sent, to the identified owner and lien holders and accompanying return receipts. If letter came back “moved no forwarding address”, submit the actual envelope unopened. **Note: If envelope is returned “unclaimed or refused”, this would not meet the requirement.** In the alternative, the claimant shall supply a detailed explanation of the unsuccessful steps taken to identify the owner and any lien holder and to secure the address of the owner or any lien holder, including any returned notices.
6. A legal notice must be posted for (3) three consecutive days in a newspaper of general circulation in the city or town of any owner of record’s last known address. (Please send original copies of the notice published, proof of dates ran and what newspaper it was published in).
7. Pencil tracing of the hull ID 12 character serial number
8. Check for \$25 payable to Commonwealth of Massachusetts for the title fee.

Please note that the claimant may apply for a title in their name (90) ninety days after the last posting of the legal notice.

The Office of Law Enforcement shall certify that the claimant has met the requirements of this section and such certification shall be included with the records of granting of the title.

Please mail your abandoned boat documents to:

**Office of Law Enforcement
218 South Main Street
Fall River, MA 02721
ATTN: Janice Santos, Registration Operations Manager**

**Phone- 508-679-8287
Fax – 508-679-0066**